

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-05

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FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO USDOC WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 9036

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, BMEP, KU

SUBJ: GOK REORGANIZATION STUDY

REF: A) KUWAIT 0581 B) KUWAIT 0194 C) KUWAIT 4515
D) STATE 06576

SUMMARY: INVITATIONS FOR GOK REORGANIZATION STUDY STILL NOT SENT AMID SIGNS PROJECT IN TROUBLE. RECENT NEWS ARTICLE IMPLIED VISIT SERVICE COMMISSION TAKING PORTION, IF NOT ALL, OF RESPONSIBILITY AWAY FROM PLANNING BOARD. THIS SOMEWHAT CONFIRMED BY EMBOFF'S CONVERSATIONS WITH APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS, ALTHOUGH REPORTS OF STUDY'S DEMISE AT PLANNING BOARD MAY BE PREMATURE. REQUEST COMMERCE AND SELECTED ADDRESSEE POSTS NOTIFY CONCERNED COMPANIES. END SUMMARY.

1. INVITATIONS TO BID FOR SUBJECT STUDY HAVE NOT YET BEEN SENT OUT, ALTHOUGH FIRMS TO BE INVITED WERE SELECTED PRIOR TO END JANUARY 7. (REFS A AND B). RECENTLY, ARTICLE APPEARED IN ENGLISH-LANGUAGE "KUWAITTIMES" WHICH CLAIMED THE STUDY IN ITS PERSENT FORM HAD BEEN VETOED AT A HIGH-LEVEL OF GOK BECAUSE ITS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARING SIZE OF THE GOVERNMENT CONFLICTED WITH GOK POLICY OF GUARANTEEING JOB TO EVERY KUWAITI MALE. ARTICLE FURTHER IMPLIED POLITICAL FALL-OUT FROM SUCH A

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STUDY WOULD BE TOO GREAT TO PERMIT ITS FUNDING. ARTICLE WENT ON

TO MENTION KUWAIT CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION (CSC) WAS CONSIDERING DOING ITS OWN STUDY INDEPENDENT OF THE PLANNING BOARD AND HAD ALREADY INVITED A LONDON-BASED FIRM "WHITEHEAD" TO DO THE STUDY.

2. EMBASSY HAS MADE INQUIRIES WITH BOTH PLANNING BOARD AND CSC REGARDING ARTICLE. WHILE PLANNING BOARD RETICENT TO COMMENT FURTHER ON DEVELOPMENTS, ONE OFFICIAL TACITLY ADMITTED STUDY HAD RUN INTO SERIOUS OBSTACLES AND INDICATED A REASONABLE CHANCE STILL EXISTS ORIGINAL STUDY WILL BE UNDERTAKEN; ALBEIT, WITH SOMEWHAT MODIFIED GOALS.

3. ON THE OTHER HAND, COMMOFF TOLD BY TOP CSC OFFICIAL THAT THEY WERE CONSIDERING COMPANIES TO UNDERTAKE A "RE-ORGANIZATION" STUDY AND WERE HOPING THEY WOULD BE ALLOCATED SUFFICIENT FUNDS IN NEW BUDGET TO UNDERTAKE STUDY ENCOMPASSING NOT ONLY THEIR OWN AGENCY BUT ALSO THE ENTIRE GOVERNMENT. OFFICIAL SAID FINAL SELECTION OF CONSULTANT WOULD (AS REQUIRED BY LAW) BE MADE BY THE CONSULTANT SELECTION COMMITTEE AT THE PLANNING BOARD. HOWEVER, CSC IS PLANNING TO RECOMMEND STRONGLY ONE OR MORE COMPANIES TO THE SELECTION COMMITTEE BASED ON A PRELIMINARY "STUDY" TO BE CONDUCTED WITHIN CSC BY INTERESTED CONSULTANTS. PRESENTLY, A LONDON-BASED COMPANY IS CONDUCTING SUCH A STUDY AT THE CSC WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR REFERENCE IN "TIMES" ARTICLE TO BRITISH FIRM BEING SELECTED. CSC OFFICIAL ALSO STATED THEY WOULD BE WILLING PAY MOST EXPENSES FOR COMPANIES CONDUCTING THIS PRELIMINARY STUDY.

4. WITHIN NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS GOK WILL LIKELY ALLOCATED FUNDS FOR VARIOUS PROJECTS WITHIN GOVERNMENT. AFTER FUNDS ALLOCATED, IT SHOULD BE MORE APPARENT UNDER WHOM STUDY WILL BE CONDUCTED.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: COMMERCE COMMUNICATE SUBSTANCE THIS MESSAGE TO CONSULTING COMPANIES WHICH INTERESTED IN THIS STUDY. FOR JIDDA: PASS EDWARD OVERTON IF HE STILL IN TOWN. FOR TEHRAN: NOTIFY PAUL SIMON, BATELLE. FOR BEIRU: NOTIFY FUAD LAHHAM; TEL. 220166.

6. COMMENT: AS STATED IN REFTELS, THIS PROJECT FROM INCEPTION WAS CONSIDERED POLITICALLY SENSITIVE AND IT IS NOT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SURPRISING DIFFICULTIES HAVE BEEN ENCOUNTERED, ALTHOUGH PLANNING BOARD HAD OFTEN ASSURED EMBASSY THEY HAD GREEN-LIGHT FOR STUDY. INJECTION OF CSC INTO PICTURE INDICATES BUREAUCRATIC RIVALRY AS WELL AS POLITICAL SENSITIVITY IS CAUSING DELAYS IN SELECTING CONSULTANT. UNTIL SMOKE CLEARS WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT ADVISABLE FOR ANY COMPANIES PLAN SPECIAL VISIT KUWAIT IN ORDER CONTACT CSC OFFICIALS. HOWEVER, MAY BE ADVISABLE FOR COMPANIES TO HEDGE THEIR BETS BY WRITING

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